

RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

On another occasion Seyyid Zia indicated that it may be necessary to ask not only Great Britain but also the United States for active military help. Invoking the guarantee of Iranian independence given by the Big Three in Teheran in 1943, *Ra'd-i-Emruz* wrote on January 10, 1945:

Mr. traj Iskandari, Professor Gonabadi, Prince Kambakhsh, and you, the celebrated Professor Radmanesh: Tell us under whose protectorate did you organize the demonstration of Aban 5th? Do you think that after so many scandals and intrigues we shall allow you to carry out a revolution? . . . No, my dear sirs, the Iranian nation will not permit it, and if need arises, we shall ask the American and British armies to come to our aid. We will not be ashamed to ask others for help. France, Belgium, Norway, Poland and other states requested aid from their Allies, and some of these countries have already regained their independence.

The first half of 1945 witnessed a growing bitterness in the mutual denunciations of Seyyid Zia's camp and the Communists. The end of the war in Europe placed a new weapon in the hands of the nationalist leader, the demand for speedy evacuation of Iran by foreign troops. On this point his voice could be heard unchallenged as the pro-Soviet press maintained stubborn silence.

What was the basis of Seyyid Zia's strength? Was it only British support? To make such an allegation would be to ignore completely Iranian nationalism and the fear of Soviet domination prevailing in the country.¹⁴ Concretely, Seyyid Zia derived his main strength from alliance with the clergy, merchants, landowners, and tribes.

Nor did he ignore the Majlis. A deputy himself, he worked steadily among the deputies. By the spring of 1945 he

enjoyed the support of a substantial voting block numbering about thirty-seven members. It is noteworthy, however, that this block did not include the name of Dr. Mosaddeq, author of the anticoncession oil law. Hence,

i* Seyyid Zia was supported by a coalition of newspapers called first the "National Front" and later the "Independence Front." The following dailies and periodicals belonged to it: *Karavan*, *Qanun*, *Ra'd-i-Emruz*, *Sargozasht*, *Keshvar*, *Hz'r*, *Ettela'at-i-Iran*, *Tehran-i-Mossavar*, *Bakhtar*, *Mard-i-Emruz*, *Setareh*, *Asr-i-Eqtesad*, *Khorush*, *Vazife*, *Yo-Yo*, *Nameh-yi-Azad*, *Azad*, *Neda-yi-Asemani*, *Arzu*, *Xasim-i-Shomal*, *Khorshid-i-Iran* ^ *Seda-yi-Iran*, *Kushesh*, *Nahid*, *Sa'ad-i-Bashiar*, *Taqadaqi*, and *Nasim-i-Sabah*,